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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

MEMORANDUM

TO: Authorized Representatives
FROM: Linda McCulloch, Superintendent of Public Instruction *LMC*
DATE: May 12, 2008
RE: 2009 NAEP Participation

Montana will participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) between January 22 and March 7, 2009. The NAEP will assess students in grades 4, 8 and 12 in reading, mathematics and science; NAEP field staff, mostly retired Montana educators and administrators, will conduct all assessments. This is a good opportunity for Montana to demonstrate the high achievement level of our students and the excellent work of our teachers. This letter is to provide you with early notification of the schools selected in your districts and the assessment dates so that you are able to include them in your school calendars.

From 1969 through the 2002 assessments, participation in NAEP was voluntary. However, since the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, it is now a requirement that NAEP be administered in all states/territories and school districts receiving Title I funding. It is important that we all work together to meet this requirement and ensure that schools receive the monies to which they are entitled.

Federal legislation requires us to notify parents in writing about the assessment and to tell them that student participation is voluntary and that students are not required to complete each item on the assessment.

Please note a number of key features of NAEP:

- The assessment is based on a representative sample of the student population of Montana.
- The assessment protects the anonymity of the participating students and school staff.
- The assessment provides results for student groups including gender, racial/ethnic origin, students with disabilities, English Language learners, and National School Lunch eligibility, but it is not designed to produce individual student or school data.
- The assessment will take about 90 minutes of students' time. Each student is assessed in only one of the subjects.
- Field staff are hired and supervised by WESTAT, under contract with NCES. The field staff actually administers the test to minimize the need for school staff time in the assessment.

Please investigate the NAEP Web site <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard> for additional information about the assessment, for sample questions, special surveys, powerful online tools for analyzing NAEP data, and access to many NAEP publications.

You will soon receive via e-mail a complete listing of all schools in your district currently in the 2009 sample. If any of the schools on the list are closed, or if a new school has opened or reactivated, please contact Mike Chapman, our NAEP State Coordinator, so that adjustments to the sample can be made early in the process. Mike will be contacting the principals of these schools with additional information and details on the assessment.

If you have questions, please contact Mike by telephone at (406) 444-3450, or by e-mail at mchapman@mt.gov.

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